

STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL
PSEI OPEN: 6,578.65 HIGH: 6,578.65 LOW: 6,547.71 CLOSE: 6,558.63 VOL.: 0.464 B VAL(P): 5,494 B 49.73 pts. 0.75% 30 DAYS TO MAY 15, 2024	MAY 15, 2024 JAPAN (NIKKEI 225) 38,385.73 ▲ 29.67 0.08 HONG KONG (HANG SENG) 19,073.71 ▼ -41.35 -0.22 TAIWAN (WEIGHTED) 21,147.21 ▲ 161.36 0.77 THAILAND (SET INDEX) 1,369.16 ▲ -7.41 -0.54 S. KOREA (KSE COMPOSITE) 2,730.34 ▲ 3.13 0.11 SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES) 3,289.74 ▼ -23.61 -0.71 SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES) 7,753.70 ▲ 26.90 0.35 MALAYSIA (KLCSE COMPOSITE) 1,603.23 ▼ -2.65 -0.17 <small>* CLOSING PRICES AS OF MAY 14, 2024</small>	MAY 14, 2024 Dow Jones 39,558.110 ▲ 126.600 NASDAQ 16,511.880 ▲ 122.94 S&P 500 5,246.680 ▲ 25.260 FTSE 100 8,428.130 ▲ 13.14 Euro Stoxx50 4,522.410 ▼ -6.50	FX OPEN P57.710 HIGH P57.505 LOW P57.740 CLOSE P57.505 W.AVE. P57.634 VOL. \$1,272.00 M SOURCE : BAP 33.50 cvs 30 DAYS TO MAY 15, 2024	MAY 15, 2024 LATEST BID (0900GMT) JAPAN (YEN) 155.730 ▲ 156.370 HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR) 7.808 ▲ 7.812 TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR) 32.126 ▲ 32.341 THAILAND (BAHT) 36.520 ▲ 36.670 S. KOREA (WON) 1,357.980 ▲ 1,367.660 SINGAPORE (DOLLAR) 1.349 ▲ 1.353 INDONESIA (RUPIAH) 16,025 ▲ 16,090 MALAYSIA (RINGGIT) 4.703 ▲ 4.717	MAY 15, 2024 US\$/UK POUND 1.2613 ▲ 1.2555 US\$/EURO 1.0824 ▲ 1.0789 US\$/AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR 0.6640 ▲ 0.6608 CANADA DOLLAR/US\$ 1.3629 ▼ 1.3668 SWISS FRANC/US\$ 0.9050 ▼ 0.9074	FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY \$83.90/BBL 30 DAYS TO MAY 14, 2024

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S TO MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • MAY 15, 2024 (PSEI snapshot on S1/2; article on S2/2)

SM P866.000 Value P492,997,730 -P21.000 ▼ -2.368%	ACEN P5.000 Value P470,343,110 PO.430 ▲ 9.409%	ICT P349.000 Value P426,736,386 -P4.400 ▼ -1.245%	GLO P1,913.000 Value P304,125,745 P53.000 ▲ 2.849%	SMPH P27.100 Value P265,269,910 -P0.100 ▼ -0.368%	ALI P28.200 Value P249,922,105 P0.200 ▲ 0.714%	BDO P138.000 Value P236,647,216 -P2.100 ▼ -1.499%	AC P585.000 Value P225,889,965 -P8.500 ▼ -1.432%	AEV P37.000 Value P189,666,265 -P1.350 ▼ -3.520%	MWC P27.000 Value P119,101,690 P0.350 ▲ 1.313%
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Remittance growth slows in March

Recto expects BSP to keep rates steady amid weak peso

LATEST INFLATION DATA and the recent peso performance will likely prompt the central bank to extend its policy pause, Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto said.

"We'll take a look at the data. So far, the way I see it, unless something changes between now and then, I think (it will be) more or less steady," he told reporters late on Tuesday.

Mr. Recto is part of the seven-member Monetary Board, which is set to have its meeting today (May 16).

The BSP is widely expected to keep its benchmark rate at a 17-year high of 6.5%, according to 17 out of 19 analysts in a *BusinessWorld* poll last week.

From May 2022 to October 2023, the central bank raised interest rates by a total of 450 basis points (bps) to tame inflation. It last raised borrowing costs in an off-cycle rate hike in October.

"It all depends on inflation. We all go back to inflation. The expectations for inflation this year are lower than expected. But it will still be sticky. I think it will be a little higher next year also," Mr. Recto said.

Inflation accelerated for a third straight month to 3.8% in April from 3.7% in March. It also marked the fifth straight month that inflation settled within the BSP's 2-4% target range.

Inflation averaged 3.4% in the January-April period, below the central bank's 3.8% full-year forecast.

Mr. Recto said that the peso's recent performance will also be factored in the Monetary Board's decision on Thursday.

"That's part of it, why I think rates will stay the same," he said.

The peso has been trading at the P57 level since mid-April.

The peso closed at P57.505 against the dollar on Wednesday, strengthening by 33.5 centavos from its P57.84 finish on Tuesday.

The Finance chief said that the Monetary Board may begin cutting rates by the fourth quarter of this year.

"Moving forward, I expect rates to go lower. Maybe not this Monetary Board (meeting), but it's possible that within the end of the year, there could be a possible reduction in rates," he said.

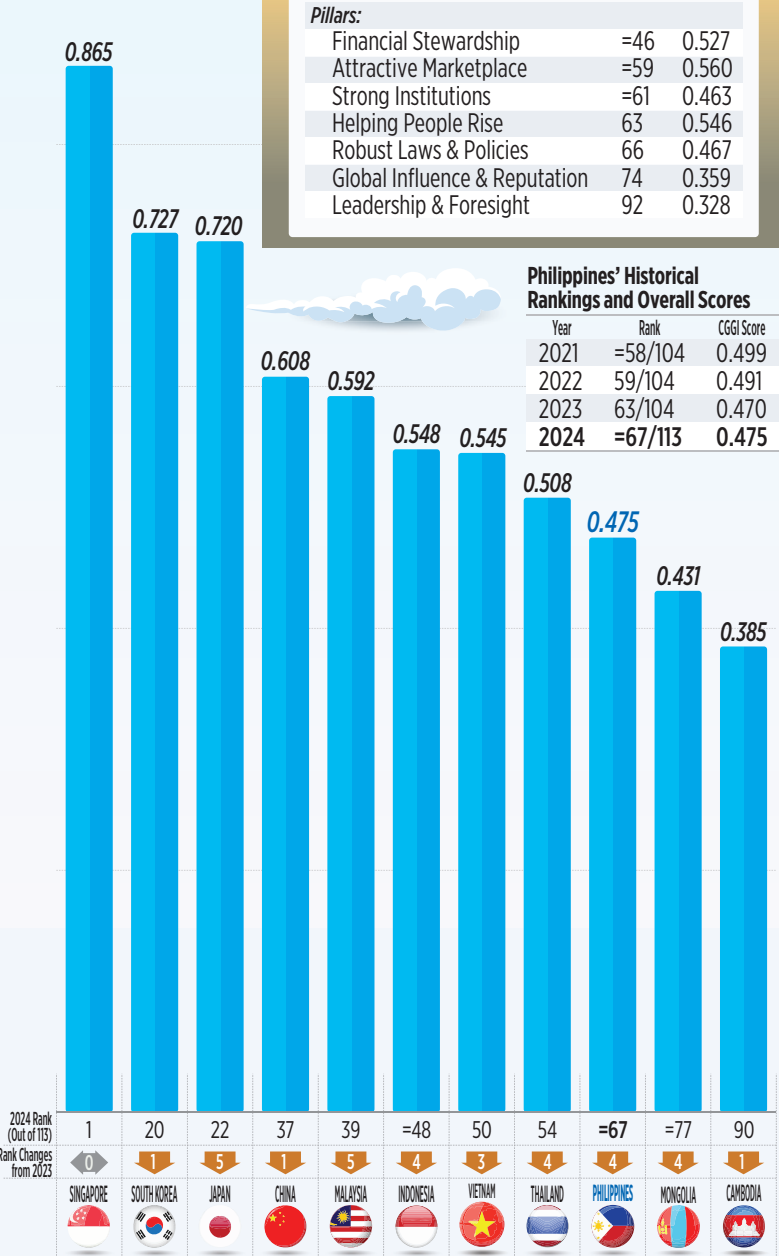
BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr. said that they could reduce rates if inflation settles firmly in the 3% area. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsion**

PHILIPPINES SLIPS IN 2024 CHANDLER GOOD GOVERNMENT INDEX

The Philippines fell four spots to 67th place out of 113 countries in the fourth edition of the Chandler Institute of Governance's Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI). It tied with the Dominican Republic. The index assesses the governance capabilities and public sector effectiveness of each country. In a scale of 0 (worst) to 1 (best), the country's overall score stood at 0.475, third lowest among its peers in the East and Southeast Asia region. This was the country's worst performance since the annual index started in 2021.



2024 CGGI Scores of East and Southeast Asian Countries (higher is better)



Notes: — Nine countries were added to this year's list, namely Bangladesh, Slovakia, Malta, Luxembourg, Dominican Republic, Saudi Arabia, Cameroon, Benin, and Paraguay. — The 2024 iteration of the index featured revised data normalization process and metric updates. To ensure comparability across all years, previous country rankings were revised.

Top 10			Bottom 10				
2024 Rank (Out of 113)	Country	Rank Changes from 2023	2024 CGGI Score	2024 Rank (Out of 113)	Country	Rank Changes from 2023	2024 CGGI Score
1	Singapore	0	0.865	113	Venezuela	9	0.177
2	Denmark	2	0.835	112	Lebanon	10	0.259
3	Finland	0	0.829	111	Zimbabwe	8	0.268
4	Switzerland	2	0.816	110	Nigeria	9	0.288
5	Norway	0	0.810	109	Mali	9	0.297
6	Sweden	0	0.806	108	Mozambique	9	0.300
7	Luxembourg	New Entrant	0.796	107	Iran	11	0.303
8	Germany	0	0.792	106	Ethiopia	12	0.311
9	Netherlands	2	0.790	105	Zambia	7	0.315
10	Ireland	1	0.771	104	Madagascar	11	0.318

Source: The Chandler Institute of Governance's Chandler Good Government Index 2024 (https://chandlergoodgovernmentindex.com/) BusinessWorld Research; Andrea C. Abestano and Abigail Marie P. Yraola BusinessWorld Graphics; Bong R. Fortin

By Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsion Reporter

MONEY SENT HOME by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in March recorded its slowest pace of growth in nine months, data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) showed.

Cash remittances — which fuels household spending — grew by 2.5% to \$2.74 billion in March from \$2.67 billion in the same month last year.

The growth in cash remittances eased from the 3% recorded in February. It was also the slowest pace of annual growth in nine months or since 2.1% in June 2023.

Month on month, cash remittances coursed through banks rose by 3.5% from \$2.65 billion in February.

"The increase in personal remittances in March 2024 was due to remittances from land-based workers with work contracts of one year or more and sea- and land-based workers with work contracts of less than one year," the BSP said.

Remittances from land-based workers went up by 3% to \$2.15 billion in March, while money sent by sea-based workers inched up by 0.9% to \$588.787 million.

"The slight dip may be attributed to foreign exchange nuances with the

peso much weaker in March 2024 versus March 2023," ING Bank NV. Manila Senior Economist Nicholas Antonio T. Mapa said in a Viber message.

"Slower inflation for first quarter 2024 versus the corresponding quarter last year could also be tagged as one reason for the slight underperformance," he added.

In March, inflation accelerated to 3.7% from 3.4% in February. However, it was much slower than the 7.6% print a year earlier.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort noted there was a seasonal increase in remittances due to the "holiday-related spending for the Holy Week in the latter part of March."

Meanwhile, cash remittances rose by 2.7% to \$8.22 billion in the first quarter from \$8 billion in the same period a year ago.

"The growth in cash remittances from the United States (US), Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Singapore contributed mainly to the increase in remittances in Q1 2024," the central bank said.

In the January-March period, the United States accounted for 41.2% of overall remittances. This was followed by Singapore (7.2%), Saudi Arabia (5.9%), Japan (5%), and the United Kingdom (4.4%).

Remittance, S1/8

JICA eyes more railway, social development projects in PHL

By Beatriz Marie D. Cruz Reporter

THE JAPAN International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is looking to fund more railway infrastructure and social development initiatives in the Philippines this year.

"For this year, actually we have many, many pipeline projects here, but it's a little bit early for me to say the actual number because we need more consultation with our Japanese parliament, taxpayers, and the Japanese government," JICA Chief Representative in the Philippines Takema Sakamoto told *BusinessWorld* on the sidelines of an event late on Tuesday.

"Last year, size-wise, I signed roughly ¥300 billion (around P110 billion)... and I hope we can maintain the same size or level for that."

Official development assistance (ODA) from foreign lenders helps the Philippine government fund major infrastructure and social development initiatives amid limited fiscal space.

This year, JICA will continue supporting the Philippines' railway projects to encourage the public's shift to

mass transportation, Mr. Sakamoto said.

JICA will also continue funding the construction of roads and bridges in the country.

In March, the Philippine government and JICA signed two loan commitments totaling ¥250 billion to fund the ongoing construction of the Metro Manila Subway and a road project that involves building the longest tunnel in the country.

JICA also recently partnered with Japanese firms Sumitomo Corp. and Hankyu Corp. to support the operations and maintenance of Light Rail Transit Line 1.

For this year, the agency is looking to fund social development initiatives, particularly in health and water sanitation, Mr. Sakamoto said.

JICA is also planning to fund initiatives to promote peace in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

In particular, JICA will continue supporting BARMM's infrastructure development, job creation, skills training, as well as governance and capacity development, Mr. Sakamoto said.

"The Bangsamoro peace process is not just for the Bangsamoro area's development, but for the entire Philippines' JICA, S1/8

Philippines falls to its worst good governance index ranking in 3 years

By Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza Reporter

THE PHILIPPINES' ranking in a global good governance index dropped four spots to 67th out of 100 countries — its worst showing in three years — as it scored lower in several indicators including leadership and foresight.

It also fared worse in financial stewardship at 0.53 from 0.54 previously, and in global influence and reputation at 0.36 from 0.38 previously, in Chan-

dler Institute of Governance's Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI).

The Philippines' score in helping people rise improved to 0.55 from 0.38, while it scored higher as an attractive marketplace to 0.56 from 0.53 last year, according to a report posted by the Chandler Institute on its website on Wednesday.

The country's scores for strong institutions and robust laws and policies were unchanged at 0.46 and 0.47.

In Southeast Asia, there was a broad sense of progress in helping

people rise from 2021 to 2024, the report said.

In the helping people rise pillar, the Philippines was recognized for efforts in health along with Malaysia and for income distribution along with Vietnam. Other indicators include education, satisfaction with public services, and personal safety.

"In other words, Southeast Asian countries have made strong progress across a number of outcome-related indicators," the report said.

"It is possible this sense of national momentum and progress

enhances citizens' satisfaction with their country's public services and general governance."

Singapore topped the index, followed by Denmark (2nd), Finland (3rd), Switzerland (4th), Norway (5th), Sweden (6th), Luxembourg (7th), Germany (8th), the Netherlands (9th), and Ireland (10th).

In the East and Southeast Asia region, the Philippines lagged behind Singapore, South Korea (20th), Japan (22nd), China (37th), Malaysia (39th), Indonesia (48th), Vietnam (50th) and Thailand (54th).

The Philippines was only ahead of Mongolia (77th) and Cambodia (90th).

The Philippines' failure to improve significantly in the index against the backdrop of poor performance in leadership and foresight reflects the country's 'lukewarm' government performance," said Emy Ruth Gianan, who teaches economics at Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

"In a sense, it has been our operation for the past decades. We rely on incremental policy development, waiting for years

before more progressive and inclusive laws are in place," she said in a Facebook Messenger chat.

She cited the country's poor accountability measures, with many Filipinos not demanding much from their local and national leaders.

"We also cannot participate in these kinds of discourse fully because we need to meet our basic needs first," she said. "Both challenges reinforce each other, creating that room for a mid-performance in governance."

Governance, S1/8



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